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Senate Committee on Education

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Testimony Before the Senate Education Committee
Regarding the 1999-01 Wisconsin State Budget
As it Affects the Technical College System

April 14, 1999

Edward Chin, State Director

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee to highlight and comment upon those items in the budget bill that impact the Technical College System. We appreciate the interest and support the Committee has extended to the System over the years. We understand the difficult task in putting this budget together. The state's commitment to fund two-thirds of K-12 education, the fiscal challenges posed by corrections and health care, and the priority placed on tax relief have clearly meant that less discretionary funding is available in the state budget.

Student Financial Assistance

We are, therefore, pleased to see that the Governor recognizes the importance of our System in meeting the state's workforce needs by his proposal to create a \$3.3 million Technical College Study Grant program. As I understand the proposal, high school graduates with solid academic records as measured by their GPAs would receive a grant from the state if they enroll full-time in a technical college within one year of graduation from high school. Attracting more high school graduates to technical college is one of the strategic goals set by the State Board and strongly supported by the 16 technical college districts through their school-to-work and tech prep efforts. This new program's merit based student assistance will also convey the message that Technical College programs are of a high academic rigor.

Correspondingly, the System appreciates the Governor's proposal to provide a 6% annual increase in funding for Wisconsin Higher Education Grants for technical college students. Increasing this need-based financial aid program will help maintain student access.

We do have a concern regarding the tuition remission program recently established by the state for the surviving children and spouses of fire fighters, law enforcement officers, and correctional officers killed in the line of duty. The sum certain, annual appropriation of \$15,000 GPR was sufficient in the first year of the program (1996-97), but remissions have exceeded the appropriation since then (by \$1,200 in 1997-98 and by an estimated \$3,800 in 1998-99). Our preferred way to address this issue would be to change the appropriation to a sum sufficient because, by state law, a full remission of tuition must be granted by a technical college to an eligible individual. At a minimum though, we would ask that the Committee consider increasing the appropriation to address the shortfall and to accommodate any potential growth. (It should be noted that the Governor's budget would increase the UW System's annual appropriation for this purpose from \$15,000 GPR to \$30,000 GPR.)

Categorical Aid Programs

We further appreciate the Governor's proposal to provide \$500,000 GPR during the biennium to support the development of Waukesha County Technical College's printing program. As highlighted in the Governor's state-of-state address, this unique 2+2+2

program will enable students to participate in a two-year combination youth apprenticeship/tech prep printing program in high school, move on to Waukesha's printing and publishing associate degree program and then complete a baccalaureate degree from UW-Stout. A student would never have to leave the Waukesha area to complete this program. The program is a model collaborative effort which the System hopes to see replicated in other districts with other programs.

The Governor also recommends two items under the Department of Commerce's budget for the Wisconsin Development Fund that will have a positive impact on the System. First, the budget authorizes \$1,000,000 in each year of the biennium for the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WMEP) which provides technical assistance and helps small and medium sized businesses assess their needs and implement the latest technologies and also provides customized training for employes of smaller companies supplying original equipment manufacturers. The technical colleges are active participants in the WMEP. Second, the budget provides \$500,000 in each year of the biennium to support a consortium in the Racine-Kenosha area of business, governmental and education entities (including Gateway Technical College) to provide training in manufacturing technology for secondary and post-secondary students, displaced workers and local manufacturing workers.

Need for Additional State Support

General State Aid

While the budget proposal contains the positive items noted above, we are disappointed that the budget includes no increase in general state aids for the System. General aid is the System's largest source of state assistance totaling \$113.5 million GPR in the current fiscal year (1998-99). During the last two biennia, general aid has increased by a grand total of 3% (no increase in the 1995-97 biennium and 1.5% annual increases in the 1997-99 biennium). Another two years of frozen general aids would place additional pressure on the property tax. Quite frankly, during the last four years, technical college districts have had to rely upon the property tax to fund a disproportionate share of their budgetary requirements.

We must also remind the Committee that the state's participation in funding the Technical College System has slipped to about 23% this year. Ten years ago the state's share was 30% and twenty years ago it was 35%. A 0% increase for the next two years would bring the state share to nearly 20%.

The State Board originally requested the Governor to consider general aid increases of 4.4% in the first year and 4.8% in the second year at a total cost of \$15.7 million GPR (\$5 million increase beginning in 1999-00 followed by an additional \$5.7 million in 2000-01). This proposal seeks to halt the decline in state support, allow at a minimum the same level of programming and services to continue in the next biennium, and assist the System in meeting the workforce training needs of the districts and the state. We

urge the Committee to consider this proposal, which is the consensus of the State Board, District Boards Association, District Presidents Association, Technical College Student Governments Association, WEAC, WFT and WVA.

Targeted Assistance

In addition, the Technical College System hopes that the Committee will consider resources to support several other targeted funding proposals requested by the State Board, but not included in AB 133. Specifically, the Board requested:

- \$300,000 GPR annually to expand access to assistive technology by disabled students and workers.
- \$100,000 GPR annually to facilitate re-entry into the labor force for displaced homemakers.
- \$400,000 GPR annually to expand career opportunities in non-traditional occupations for both women and men.

These items involve special services to target populations which is a very important part of the System's statutory mission. We believe that if the state wants to increase the pool of skilled workers available to employers, it must expand the employment possibilities of those individuals who need supportive services in order to benefit from education and training.

Technology

With regard to technology, the Board requested \$500,000 GPR annually to support WTCS district projects that integrate the use of new instructional technology into the technical college curriculum. These funds would build upon the successes of the districts' teaching innovation centers which are partially supported by state GPR monies. These centers assist faculty in learning how to use new and emerging technologies effectively in the design and delivery of instruction. The additional funds would allow technical college instructors to move from the mastery of technology to the actual integration and use of technology in curriculum design, content and delivery.

The System benefited by the creation of the TEACH telecommunications access program in the last budget. Each WTCS district received one interactive video link and the monthly line charge for that link is partially subsidized by the TEACH Board. These additional video links will allow the colleges to continue to play an important role in distance education not only within the System, but also with K-12 school districts and other postsecondary institutions. In the budget, the Governor recommends a series of changes related to the access program including a proposal to merge the funds for the WTCS line subsidies with the funds for private colleges and public libraries. The amount of funding available in this appropriation would be increased by nearly 80% in the first year. However, it appears that none of that increase would be available for WTCS districts since each district is limited to only one subsidized video link through TEACH even though 15 of the 16 districts have more than one campus location. We

would ask that as the Committee reviews this item, you consider expanding the number of WTCS campus sites eligible for a TEACH subsidy, and possibly include state educational agencies as eligible entities.

School to Work

The budget bill recommends the creation of a nine-member Work-Based Learning Board attached to the Department of Workforce Development to oversee various school-to-work programs. The System would have two representatives on the Boardthe President of the Technical College System Board and the State Director. We believe that a focused examination of school-to-work programs is appropriate especially at a time when the state's five-year federal grant under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act is expiring. We also believe that it is important that the state ensure adequate financial support for the breadth of School to Work activities, including workbased learning programs like youth apprenticeship and school-based learning programs such as tech-prep. The budget would transfer the authority to administer \$2.1 million in federal tech-prep funds to the new Work-Based Learning Board. Currently, those funds are jointly administered by the WTCS Board and DPI and are used primarily to support school-based activities (such as course articulation between high schools and technical colleges, integrated and applied academics curriculum development, advanced standing agreements, staff development and career exploration activities) to ensure a more seamless transition for students between high school and technical college. As a matter of note, the Technical Colleges receive a preponderance of their enrollments out of high school as a result of school based learning activities. At this time, it cannot be determined how the proposed Work-Based Learning Board might want to direct the federal tech-prep funds. A preliminary discussion among the key agencies to be involved in the Work Based Learning Board indicates a willingness to consider a variety of program and funding options to reach a consensus. In the effort to support workbased programs like youth apprenticeship, school-based learning efforts should not be diminished. Both are critically important.

Finally, we have a concern regarding a provision under the Governor's Work-Based Learning Board which would require the WTCS Board to expend up to \$125,000 annually from federal funds received under the Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act to develop curricula for youth apprenticeship programs. As drafted, this provision would require that this expenditure would be made from appropriation 20.292(1)(m) Federal aid, state operations. According to the Department of Administration, this was a drafting error and the reference should have been made to appropriation 20.292(1)(n) Federal aid, local assistance. The curriculum to be developed would be for high school students and so is more appropriately assigned to this appropriation.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to present testimony. I again express my hope that the Technical Colleges will be high on the Legislature's priority list.

F:\wtcs\general\Senate Ed testimony





122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703 PHONE: 608-257-2622 • FAX: 608-257-8386

To:

Senate Committee on Education

From:

Annette Talis and Senn Brown

WASB Legislative Services (4/14/99)

Re: WASB Recommendations on Selected Budget Bill Issues

School boards and state officials share the responsibility for enhancing educational opportunities and improving student achievement. These WASB recommendations on selected budget bill issues are intended to support local leadership and accountability to improve the education of all students.

State School Aids

- Support continuation of the state's commitment to fund two-thirds of school costs including capital and debt service expenditures.
- Support the elimination of the \$75 million delay in state aid payments into the next fiscal year.
- Support a greater level of state and federal funding for the costs of special education programs.
- Support legislation allowing districts to count 4-year-old kindergarten pupils on a full-time equivalency basis.
- Support school districts having an option of either including or excluding from the state aid formula any costs associated with capital facility, site and equipment improvements.
- Support legislation for the certification of state aid amounts and revenue limits by July 30 in order to improve the local budgeting process.
- Oppose changes in the funding of charter and choice schools in Milwaukee that negatively affect state aids for all school districts.

Revenue Caps

- Support revenue cap relief for declining-enrollment districts. Support the continuation of a declining-enrollment adjustment at least equal to 75% of what the decline in the three-year rolling average memberships would have generated. Allow a district to use its highest enrollment in the past five years to calculate its revenue limit
- Support continuation of annual indexing of the per-pupil revenue cap.

(WASB Continued - Page 2 of 2)

- Support an increase in the \$6,100 per-pupil revenue cap ceiling for low-spending districts.
- Support exempting the difference between the statutory special education target reimbursement rate and the reimbursement amount.
- Support repeal of revenue limits if the state fails to fund two-thirds of school costs.

QEO

• Support legislation to better align the QEO and revenue limits.

Technology

- Support the proposed increased funding for the TEACH program.
- Support strong public school representation on any new board created to govern public broadcasting.

Wisconsin Rural Challenge Initiative

• Support a Wisconsin Rural Challenge program to stimulate initiatives that connect student learning with school and community revitalization.

Tax Incremental Financing

• Support lowering school property tax rates in more than 93% of school districts by appropriating state funds to replace the nearly \$50 million in school property taxes annually diverted to cities and villages for TIF project costs.

Support for Proposals

- Support increased funding for the SAGE program.
- Support proposed \$1.5 million funding for staff development grants.
- Support proposed increases in funding for state tuition payments.
- Support proposed funding for a new smoking prevention program.

Opposition to Proposals

- Oppose restricting school boards' options in scheduling local referenda.
- Oppose allowing the state superintendent to overturn a school board's denial of a petition to start up a new charter school.

Thank you for your consideration of the WASB's recommendations.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Wisconsin Legislature

FROM: Pete Christianson, for the Suburban Schools

Legislative Committee

RE: Chapter 220 Provisions in Budget Bill

Assembly Bill 133 -- Senate Bill 45

The Governor's Budget, if enacted, would make a major change in the manner in which school districts are compensated for their participation in the interdistrict portion of the Chapter 220 Program. Milwaukee Public Schools and the 23 suburban districts which participate in the interdistrict Chapter 220 Program all strongly oppose the proposed change and request that it be stricken from the Budget.

Under current law, each student that participates in the interdistrict Chapter 220 Program is counted by his or her district of residence. Under the Governor's proposal, each student would be counted at 50%. The effect of the proposed change would be to cut in half the amount that each district receives for students which transfer to another district under the Chapter 220 Program.

Milwaukee Public Schools utilizes this sender aid to pay for all transportation for students participating in the Chapter 220 Program. Unless the state wishes to pay separately for the cost of bussing, this change will represent a substantial burden on MPS. Sender aid is equally important to the suburban districts, which use the revenue to support their educational programs and services.

Sender aid was included in the Chapter 220 Program because the Legislature and Governor understood that the marginal costs associated with educating students would not be reduced because a student chose to participate in Chapter 220. As a result, sender aid is a necessary part of the funding for Chapter 220. Because the reduction in sender aid would occur inside the revenue limits, districts would not be permitted to raise revenue to make up for the lost funds. Instead, districts will be required to reduce spending. Such a double penalty is highly inequitable.

It should be remembered that the Chapter Program is the state's only tool to combat segregation. It is also the oldest, largest, and most successful "school choice" program in the country, with more than 5,000 students participating each year. While virtually all suburban school districts have seen an increase in resident minority populations as a result of the program, Chapter 220 remains the catalyst for cultural diversity in many districts. In short, the program is working well and should not be changed. For that reason the proposed change in funding for the Chapter 220 Program should be stricken from the Budget.

Dear Senator Grobschmidt and members of the Education Comittee:

On August 31st, <u>Capital Times</u> features editor Jacob Stockinger, in an editorial entitled "Charge for parking, not books," suggested that if school districts can charge textbook and user fees in athletics and the arts, then "maybe it would also be fair to charge a certain percentage of high medical and staff costs to the families of special education students."

On December 1st, in a <u>Capital Times</u> story entitled "Band Budgets Pinched," reporter Jon Segal interviews Meg Stevens, president of the Memorial Band Boosters. "Stevens, whose daughter plays euphonium in Memorial's band and whose husband is a U.W. professor, says money is spent disproportionately on special-needs programs. 'Too much of the money has to go to the problem kids,' she says. Stevens acknowledges special programs are needed, and observed that the programs are often mandated at state or federal levels. That makes it easy for administrators to funnel funds into them and away from programs like band. 'Can they cut them? I don't know,' Stevens says. 'I really think that the good kids get the shaft.'"

Most recently, on January 23rd, in a front page story entitled "Gouging the Gifted," <u>Capital Times</u> reporter Jason Shepard several times contrasts spending on TAG (talented and gifted) programs with spending on special education programs. "Statistics from the state Department of Public Instruction for the 1997-98 school year show that spending in school districts statewide for talented and gifted instruction totaled 0.6 percent of district budgets, while spending for special education instruction totaled 16.79 percent." Then later in the article, when the Madison School district is discussed, "Yet the total instructional budget for Tag in Madison in 1997-98 was \$725,193, compared with \$32.9 million for special education." Towards the end of the article, there is a quote from Catherine Dupont, director of instruction for the Monona Grove School District, "We do spend so little money on talented and gifted offerings compared to the other end. We are not asking for equal funding. But federal and state funding is available for special education, and very little federal and no state funding for talented and gifted."

My point is that when Madison's "progressive newspaper" deems it appropriate to express these sentiments in its articles and editorial pages, we're in a lot of trouble. There's a backlash out there against special education, because parents are starting to realize that regular ed programming is being cut due to financially strapped school districts having to spend their general fund budgets on special ed. The real irony is that the parents of special ed students do not want these program cuts. Some of our kids are in band and orchestra programs, and in Talented and Gifted programs. We want smaller classes because our kids are in those classes, and smaller class sizes benefit all children.

We are asking the legislature to increase categorical aids for special education in this year's budget so that school districts can spend less general funds on special ed. Exempting special education costs from revenue caps is not a good solution; everyone would know who to blame for their property taxes going up, and the backlash would grow. A few weeks ago the U.S. Supreme Court re-affirmed the right of children with disabilities to a free, appropriate public education. But that right means little without sufficient funding, both for special ed and regular ed. Please, do the right thing; increase categorical aids for special education.

Donna Rosinski, president Autism Society of Madison

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION 1999-2001 Agency Budget Priorities

State Superintendent John T. Benson

Challenging Academic Standards and Student Assessment:

- Provide continued funding for the development and administration of the HSGT [\$3,597,000 GPR in FY00 and \$6,600,000 GPR and 6.0 FTE positions in FY01]
- Provide cost-to-continue funding for 4th, 8th and 10th grade tests [\$82,400 GPR in FY00 and \$142,400 GPR in FY01]
- Provide cost-to-continue funding for Third Grade Reading Test [\$22,100 GPR in FY00 and \$45,400 GPR in FY01]
- * Modify current no social promotion language by making 4th and 8th grade tests one of several factors used by a School Board to determine student advancement to 5th and 9th grades.

Staff Development and Licensing:

- Provide funding for DPI Staff Development (WASDI) Initiative [\$500,000 GPR in FY00 and \$1,000,000 GPR in FY01]
- Provide additional funding for Peer Review and Mentoring Grants [\$500,000 GPR annually]
- Provide continued funding for National Teacher Certification Incentive Program [\$50,000 GPR in FY00 and \$112,500 GPR in FY01]

Early Learning:

- Provide continued funding and expansion of the SAGE program [\$3.45 million GPR in FY00 and \$13.5 million GPR in FY01]
- Provide funding for the Wisconsin Morning Milk Program [\$242,100 GPR in FY00 and \$281,300 GPR in FY01]
- Provide funding to double the Head Start program using federal child care funds [\$9.9 million PR annually]
- Provide funding for Early Learning Centers [\$900,000 annually (\$600,000 GPR and \$300,000 TANF funds)]
- * Provide that four-year old kindergarten pupils be counted for school aid and revenue limit purposes on a full-time equivalency basis, reflective of the number of hours scheduled for the program.
- Provide funding for the School Breakfast Program [\$697,600 GPR in FY00 and \$742,100 GPR in FY01]

Minority Student Achievement:

- * Provide funding for the Minority Precollege Scholarship Program [\$950,000 GPR annually]
- Provide funding for a WEOP position at DPI's Milwaukee Office [\$37,900 GPR in FY00 and \$42,200 GPR in FY01 and 1.0 FTE position]
- * Provide cost-to-continue funding for the P-5 Program [\$350,000 GPR annually]

School District Financing:

- Continue the state's commitment to fund 2/3 of partial school revenues, including debt service costs.
- Remove the sunset date relating to the revenue limit exemption for declining enrollment districts.
- * Concerned about the Gov. proposal to freeze the CPI inflation add-on for the per pupil increase permitted school districts under the revenue limits at \$208.88.
- * Concerned that there needs to be a legislative solution to special education funding. I have submitted previous budgets that address this issue, including high cost EEN and foster children but have not been successful. This time, I appointed a taskforce of credible professionals who made a number of recommendations. The LAB (at Sen. Plache's request) decided to study this issue and indicated it would include the taskforce's recommendations in its study report that will be released in April.

School District Operations:

- * The following provision should be removed from the Gov. Budget:
 - Changes in school district referenda scheduling
 - Changes in school contracting authority

Agency Operations:

- * Modify the provision in the Gov. budget that transfers the School-to-Work program and \$1.9 million in Carl Perkins local assistance funds, including \$90,000 adm. funds from DPI to DWD.
- * Modify the provision in the Gov. budget that provides \$350,000 GPR, beginning in FY01, to create a foreign language instruction grant program to be administered by the TEACH Board and instead require the DPI to administer a foreign language instruction grant program to promote foreign language instruction at the elementary school level.

Public Library Resources:

- * Support Gov. proposal to fund Badgerlink using TEACH funds [\$836,000 GPR in FY00 and \$1,700,000 GPR in FY01]
- * Provide funding for Library System Aid at 13% index level (statutes required department to submit this request [\$5,42,200 GPR in FY00 and \$6,244,700 GPR in FY01]

Safe Schools:

* Provide funding for a safe schools grant program [\$1.0 million GPR in FY01]

Human Growth and Development:

- * Provide funding to CESAs and school districts to assist them in improving human growth and development instruction and programs consistent with the abstinence-based local human growth and development principles contained in the *Brighter Futures: The Wisconsin Plan to Prevent Adolescent Pregnancy* task force report [\$850,00 annually using TANF funds].
- Denotes items DPI would like to have deleted, modified or added to Governor's budget request

Prepared by the DPI Policy and Budget Team 4/14/99